

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-20
ACDA-12 TRSE-00 MCT-01 SY-05 AID-05 /100 W
-----054797 092252Z /21

R 091748Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0000
INFO AMCONSUL FLORENCE
AMCONSUL GENOA
AMCONSUL MILAN
AMCONSUL NAPLES
AMCONSUL PALERMO

UNCLAS ROME 8489

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINS, SOCI, IT
SUBJECT: POLITICAL VIOLENCE SINCE MARCH 16 MORO KIDNAPPING

REF: ROME 4373

1. ACCORDING TO A COMMUNIST PARTY STUDY RELEASED MAY 5 THERE WERE 200 ACTS OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE DURING THE MONTH OF APRIL, A DROP FROM THE 242 REPORTED IN MARCH. WHEN COMPARED WITH 350 IN JANUARY AND A SIMILAR NUMBER IN FEBRUARY, THESE FIGURES INDICATE A REDUCTION THAT MIGHT BE ATTRIBUTED, AT LEAST IN PART, TO THE LARGE-SCALE MOBILIZATION OF POLICE AND SECURITY FORCES FOLLOWING THE MARCH 16 KIDNAPPING OF ALDO MORO. THESE NUMBERS, HOWEVER, REMAIN ALARMING. THE STUDY REPORTS 1140 ACTS OF VIOLENCE IN THE FIRST FOUR MONTHS OF 1978 AGAINST 2126 IN ALL OF 1977, STATING THAT QUOTE THESE FIGURES REQUIRE NO FURTHER COMMENT. UNQUOTE.

2. ROME CONTINUES TO BE THE CITY MOST HARD-HIT BY SUCH
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VIOLENCE. TERRORISTS CARRIED OUT 77 ATTACKS, WOUNDED 16 PEOPLE, AND DESTROYED 30 AUTOMOBILES. OTHER CITIES SUFFERING POLITICAL VIOLENCE INCLUDE BOLOGNA (19 ATTACKS), MILAN (17 ATTACKS) AND TURIN (15 ATTACKS). DURING APRIL IN ITALY AS A WHOLE 2 PERSONS WERE KILLED AND 44 WERE WOUNDED.

3. IN ADDITION TO THE MORO KIDNAPPING, THE RED BRIGADS

CLAIMED RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE DEATHS OF 2 PRISON GUARDS, THE SHOOTING OF 4 OTHER PERSONS, AND VARIOUS ATTACKS ON PROPERTY MAKING IT THE MOST ACTIVE TERRORIST GROUP. OTHER VIOLENCE WAS CARRIED OUT BY SMALLER FAR LEFT AND FAR RIGHT GROUPS, THE MOST SERIOUS BEING TWO SHOOTINGS, BOTH THE WORK OF EXTREME LEFT ORGANIZATIONS.

4. ACCORDING TO THE PCI STUDY, OFFICES OF THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY AND THE COMMUNIST PARTY WERE MORE COMMON TARGETS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST PROPERTY THAN IN PREVIOUS MONTHS. CARS, OFFICES, HOMES, POLICE STATIONS, SCHOOLS AND UNION HEADQUARTERS CONTINUE AS ROUTINE OBJECTS OF VIOLENCE SUCH AS BURNING AND FIRE-BOMBING.

COMMENT: ALTHOUGH THE PCI STUDY DOES NOT BREAK DOWN ITS DATA BY POLITICAL PARTIES, THE OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF THE ATTACKS AGAINST INDIVIDUALS AND PROPERTY HAVE BEEN AGAINST THE DC AND THE ESTABLISHMENT (INDUSTRY AND GOVERNMENT). WRITING IN CORRIERE DELLA SERA ON MAY 7, ALBERTO RONCHEY EMPHASIZED THE EXTENT TO WHICH POLITICAL VIOLENCE HAS BEEN TARGETED AGAINST THE DC, NOTING THAT OVER THE PAST YEAR THERE HAVE BEEN 28 SHOOTINGS OF DC OFFICIALS AND 146 ATTACKS ON DC OFFICES OF WHICH 45 WERE FULLY DESTROYED. UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES, DC OFFICIALS NOTE WITH SATISFACTION THAT THE PARTY DID NOT EXPERIENCE DIFFICULTIES (AS IT HAD FEARED) ENLISTING CANDIDATES TO RUN ON DC LISTS
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IN THE SPRING ADMINISTRATIVE ELECTIONS DESPITE THREATS AND OTHER ATTEMPTS AT INTIMIDATION (E.G. THE PHARMACY OF A DC CANDIDATE IN PAVIA WAS BURNED ON MAY 8). END COMMENT.GARDNER

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